

# SHEFFIELD EAGLES



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SUNDAY 28TH JULY - 2.00PM

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# CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

**Good afternoon to everyone and I hope you are all well and enjoying your summer Rugby League.**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome to the Olympic Legacy Park, the home of Sheffield Eagles Rugby League Football club, Batley Bulldogs, Kevin Nicholas their Chairman, their directors, their backroom staff, players and of course their guests and spectators to the semi-final of the 1895 Cup.

The winners of this game go direct to Wembley Stadium to play the final after the Challenge Cup. The kudos to the teams playing at Wembley is massive therefore the pressure on both teams to play 'out of their skins' this afternoon is massive. Past games count for nothing and the best team this afternoon is all that matters.

If Sheffield Eagles do not up their game from the last couple of games we will miss out on a trip to Wembley. We need to be at the top of our game for a full eighty minutes.

I am writing this article after our return from Toulouse, yesterday. Before I mention the game may I thank the team and backroom staff for a great weekend without any problems whatsoever.

All of Sheffield Eagles visitors to Toulouse, as expected, behaved themselves with complete decorum and I am so proud to be associated with, as always, a group of players and backroom staff who know how to behave when on tour.

Apart from at the game while in Toulouse we met and bumped into some of our spectators who had made the trip over to France



to support Sheffield Eagles and I would like to thank each and every one of them for their continued support it was a pleasure to see you all enjoying yourself in the sunshine.

I watched the game at Toulouse from the dugout (my role keeping the water bottles full). I was astounded at the volume of water that was consumed by the players during the game.

Mr Kershaw, the Match Commissioner, gave permission for an extra water carrier to assist with trying to keep the players hydrated. It was still an eye opener to see fully fit athletes coming off the pitch and trying to breathe properly and to get their breath, it was horrendous. I now fully appreciate why warm weather training is so important to a game like ours where it is a full impact and running game.

The advantage to a team that has trained there for a week is absolutely massive. After the game at ten past eight the temperature was 34 degrees.

Regarding the game at Toulouse I have to admit that Toulouse were far better than Sheffield Eagles, being a full time squad and far more used to the temperature all showed during the game and with those conditions Toulouse Olympique had a massive advantage.

As always, we will update you further on any developments here at the Olympic Legacy Park as soon as we know further details and thank you all for your patience.

Chairman - Chris Noble MBE



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# TUBBY TALK

**Welcome to the OLP for today's 1895 Cup semi-final against Batley Bulldogs.**

I don't think I need to re-emphasise the importance of this fixture. We all know what is at stake, and I know there will be two sets of players desperate to realise a dream by winning this afternoon.

I have been fortunate to have played at Wembley during my career, and I can say there is nothing quite like it. It is a special feeling, and something that stays with you for many years. Both teams will know that, and for the majority it may be their only opportunity, so with this in mind, it promises to be a real classic.

We were beoynd disappointed with the performance and result against Toulouse last Saturday. I wanted to see a display where players would show they were worth a spot for today's semi-final, but it did not quite work out the way we would have liked.

We have lost further ground on the rest of the division as a result and it is now certainly an uphill battle to get a top five spot come the end of the season but we certainly haven't thrown in the towel just yet.

If we can win the remaining five games, you just don't know what might happen. I think we are now relying on other teams to do us a favour, but stranger things have happened, and we won't give up until it is mathematically impossible.

There were some positives to come out of the defeat last week. Playing on the Saturday gave us an extra day off, and we used the time wisely to get some recovery into the boys before we flew back. The trip to Toulouse was also



handy for some team bonding, and I think that was beneficial in putting the game to bed on Saturday night, and turning our attention to today's game.

We've trained well this week and hopefully we will have the likes of James Davey back from injury and hopefully a couple of our dual-registration players back in the fold too, it's knockout RL, it's not about the performance but the victory today.

A warm welcome to everyone connected with Batley to the OLP today. Once again, a big thank you for all of your magnificent support. We'll need it again no doubt with the prize which is at stake come full-time.

Enjoy the game.

Tubbs

Head Coach - Mark Aston



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# COMMERCIAL CORNER



**I would like to welcome all our guest to the game today and specifically Brian Smith and guests from the Sheffield Steelers and his guests. It is great to welcome another Sheffield based sports club to The OLP for this crunch Semi Final.**

Just looking back to our last home game, I would like to Thank Lynne from the Cathedral Archer project for selecting Josh Guzdek as our Man of The Match.

OK, here we go. Lets just put this into context. Today the lads will be fighting for a place at Wembley. A venue where, as CEO Andy Tyers pointed out, we have never lost at. Now I am not one to jump the gun and realize we have to overcome a very strong and, I am sure, determined, Batley side before we can celebrate but it would be huge achievement for this club not to mention the knock on effect commercially.

The exposure for us and the city would be huge and something we will be capitalizing on. When our local footballing sides

achieve the same, the exposure they received is huge. A trip like this coupled with the impending Rugby League World Cup coming to Sheffield is exposure we can only dream of and this for sure will have a knock on effect in terms

of both attendance at games and commercially.

As I wrote this, we are well on the way to confirming all our kit sponsors for next season. I am pleased to say that the majority have renewed and I am in the process of finalizing the 2020 opportunities with other. We have been fortunate in recent years that we have had a very settled set of kit sponsors which firstly shows the positivity each sponsor receives in being associated with us and that they see the value is aligning our brands.

We will also shortly be announcing our 2020 commercial packages which have opportunity for businesses and supporters alike. Please keep an eye on the website for update on this.

The first to be announced will be the 2020 brand for a grand opportunity. This will allow business to get a full suite of corporate opportunities for £1000, the value of which is far in excess of this. It will also give every company (or individual) that enters, the opportunity to win their name going on the 2020 kits. For full details please drop me an email to [mark.hannigan@sheffideagles.com](mailto:mark.hannigan@sheffideagles.com)

As always, thank you for your support and Enjoy the game.

Commercial Director - Mark Hannigan





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# FROM THE OFFICE

On the field, last weekend was anything but a success but off the field however, from my point of view, the trip (taking out the result) was a success! 27 players, backroom staff and leader in our Chairman Chris, flew out of Manchester early Friday morning, returning Sunday.

Of the five trips to Toulouse and one to Toronto I've led, it was probably the easiest and smoothest a trip has run to date and I've got to give credit to the other 26 people on the excursion. Opening my laptop on Monday morning it was great to have been forwarded an email from the Match Commissioner of the Toulouse game, Gerry Kershaw, which he sent to the RFL complimenting the club saying we were the best team he's dealt with to date and how well behaved and what ambassadors we were for the game in general.

It's rare (sadly) to get praise in this game so I was quick to thank Gerry for his kind words and also share them with the players and backroom staff. Discussing rare praise, I'd like to thank both the Toulouse club, in particular CEO Cedric Garcia, Paul and his team at Traveleads and Lea and the staff at

Sporting Village Toulouse. It's also down to their support and assistance that the trip ran so smoothly and our needs were taken care of with no fuss.

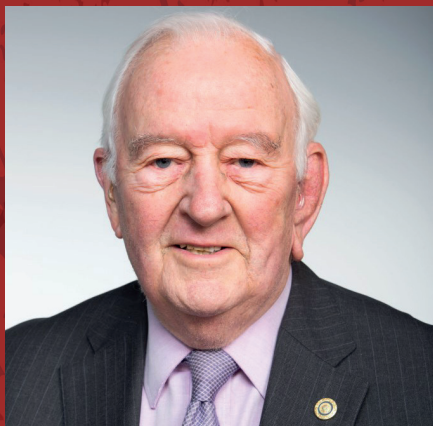
Turning to sadder events, some may have spotted the terrible news earlier this month that we sadly lost a fantastic man and great supporter of the Eagles, BBC Radio Sheffield legend, Mr Robert Jackson. Bob (as everyone knew him) was a brilliant character and what he didn't know about sport, well, in my opinion, wasn't worth knowing. A fountain of knowledge about sport from league to union, to football to crown green bowls.

Most will know but Bob was at Radio Sheffield for over 20 years and created the 'Praise and Grumble' programme. He was also chair of the Sheffield Marathon organising committee and President of the Sheffield and District Parks Bowling Association amongst many other titles and roles he held in sport, education & the media over his 88 years.

Like Tubbs, he received an honorary degree from Sheffield Hallam for his services to sport in Sheffield and he was the Master of Ceremonies for the Sheffield Eagles lunches and golf days for nearly every year of the club's existence since 1984.

It was one of my delights to sit next to Bob prior to each lunch going through the script and afternoon's proceedings then ensuring he had a G&T within his reach as the event got underway. He recently passed this baton on for our four annual lunches but still attended as the club's guest of honour and the club and me personally are deeply saddened by his passing. We will be holding a minute's silence for Bob before today's game and our thoughts go out to his widow Mary along with his three children, 8 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

General Manager - Liam Claffey



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# STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

**This is a really interesting match to do a programme article on, simply because it's our one and only home game in the 1895 Cup!**

We're heading into this game off the back of a heavy defeat to Toulouse, away, in sweltering heat and humidity that was coupled with a little lack of conviction towards how we wanted to play.

The fact that we scored a couple of tries when we found ourselves working to our plan shows that we are capable, and with that in mind we will need to stay mentally strong and play to what we know we can do well to have a chance to put Batley out of the cup and book our place at Wembley.

There is no doubt that Batley are going to come out all guns blazing this weekend. We've done a number on them with two quality performances during the season, but everything is a little different when it comes to a knockout cup situation.

We will have to counter that with our own drive and determination, and stick to the plan to get through this game with a win.

We started prep for this game the morning after the Toulouse game with an early (7:30am early!), pre-flight, recovery session in the pool at the hotel.

In terms of work on the field we've also, for the first time in a while, had a full weeks prep leading into this game with three field sessions plus off field gym and video.

So all in all from a physical stand point we've probably had the best opportunity to prep for this game that we've had



for any in a while given the hectic schedule this season.

Our biggest prep is going to be psychological. We need to get our heads right to bounce back off a heavy and disappointing loss to Toulouse.

That's something that we have proven we can do before, but this late on in the season will make it a little tougher. That aside though the opportunity to play at Wembley being a

driving force behind a win over Batley has to be something that will help drive our players.

We've beaten Batley before, and we can do it again. I believe we've got what we need to get to Wembley, so let's see how it goes!

Player Performance Manager - Simon Vardy







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# GARETH WALKER



**It took 45 matches, over 3,000 conceded points and plenty of heartache - but West Wales Raiders finally got their first win last weekend.**

The League One side beat Coventry Bears 44-16 to end one of the toughest runs in the history of the professional game.

Since playing as West Wales, the club had lost 44 straight league and cup games, shipping 3,117 points at an average of 71 a match.

Last season they conceded over 100 points on six separate occasions. But all of that became historical statistics just after 4.30pm on Saturday afternoon, when Kim Williams' side completed their historic win over the Bears.

It sparked scenes of understandable jubilation among the Raiders players, many of them who had played in the majority of those heavy defeats over the last 18 months. During that period the club stuck rigidly and admirably to its principles, which are based around the development of local players.

They brought in respected Australian Williams this season in a bid to accelerate their progress, with a spell at Melbourne Storm on his impressive CV. It has perhaps taken longer than Williams would have liked, but the Raiders will now be hoping that their ground-breaking first win is a sign of better things to come.

"We finally showed with that performance that we can be competitive in this competition and we are worthy of being here," Williams said after the game.

"But it's no good if it's just a one off. We have to focus on that now and continue to play at that level. We have a weekend off to celebrate and soak up the win, but then it's back to it with a tough game against Newcastle.

"It will be a huge test but if we can play at the standard we set against Coventry then we will be competitive against one of the top teams in the competition."

Victory was also sweet for chairman Andrew Thorne, who along with fellow director Peter Tiffin has kept the club on a stable footing amid the difficult defeats.

Thorne said: "Everything Kim has been trying to put together this season actually came together and we looked fantastic. They've been so disappointed with results in the past that they knew they had to perform.

"Seeing the reaction of the fans and everyone involved with the club made it an even better day."

If any club, and group of players, have earned a day in the sun it is West Wales Raiders. Not they will be hoping it the start of something more positive moving forward.

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# LATEST NEWS

**Sheffield Eagles director of rugby Mark Aston admits it will be a close call on the fitness of James Davey ahead of today's 1895 Cup semi-final against Batley Bulldogs.**

An ankle problem ruled the hooker out of last weekend's defeat to Toulouse, and Aston says work continues around the clock to try and have the ex-Batley ace available to face his former club.

Aston explained to The Star: "Jimmy Davey wasn't available against Toulouse, so he is a bit of a concern. It will be a close one. He came away to Toulouse with us so we could get an intense programme into him. Whether he'll make it, well, fingers crossed he will."

"Jimmy doesn't like to miss games full stop. He's a competitor, he's a winner and he's a good kid. He's devastated he's picked this up at this time, but he's busting a gut to try and be ready."

Aston also confirmed that Brad Knowles picked up a knock in the defeat in France, but he expects to see the rugged second-rower fit for Sunday's showdown, with a place at Wembley at stake for both sides.

He added: "Brad Knowles took a knock but I think he'll be fine. He's sore but we are at that time of the season when you are always sore."

"He's busted a little, but at this stage you are playing on adrenaline anyway. He will get



through it. We have a few bumps and bruises but I am confident they aren't too serious."

In other News...

Mark Aston hasn't given up on a top five finish this season but admits they must win all of their last five league games.

Aston watched his side receive a heavy defeat against high-flying Toulouse to leave the Eagles four points of a coveted top five position. With key players sidelined, it looks an

almost impossible task, but Aston hasn't yet thrown in the towel.

He told The Star: "We've five games left and if we can win them, then we have a chance. It might be out of our control but all we can do now is put our best foot forward and see how far we can go."

"I spoke about winning the last seven games before the York game, well, we haven't but it is still mathematically possible."

"If we can win five games then we'll be there or thereabouts and that's all we can do."

He added: "We have a week away from the league campaign, and then bang we are back into the thick of it with a Friday night game against Widnes."

"It's a challenge, we'll take it in our stride. We want to enjoy the end because we have had a half decent season which we don't want to unravel."



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# BEN BLACKMORE

DF: Ben, we come into this game after a tough loss away at Toulouse Olympique on Saturday. It was always going to be a challenge, especially with our injury situation wasn't it?

BB: Definitely a big challenge going over there when we have a few injuries. We had just Oggy from the dual-reg and loan lads. With the heat, it's always a tough ask so if you go there and get a win you've done well. It's just all been about this week really, as we've dusted it under the carpet.

DF: It's always a good experience going over there and testing ourselves though?

BB: It's always a big test and it's good to test ourselves. I don't think the scoreline showed the whole story. We didn't play the best but we didn't deserve to get 50 put past us. It's gone now and this is the biggest game we have had in a while.

DF: Moving on to today's semi-final, we've had the better of Batley Bulldogs over the course of the season but in a cup tie nothing can be taken for granted?

BB: No, Batley will come firing like they always do. Their coach gets them up for it and it'll be the same on Sunday. It's a big thing if we get to Wembley, it's a honour and not many can tell their kids they've played there so that's what is keeping us going.

DF: We do know that Batley have talent all across the park so it's not a surprise to see them come this far in the cup?



BB: They're in the semi so it proves they've got the skill and personnel to get there. They have a big pack, good backs but we're looking to get over them.

DF: Individually, how much have you enjoyed this season as you have found the try-line regularly throughout the campaign?

BB: It's been the most tries I've scored for a while! Personally I think I started the season better than where I am at now, as a squad we've been up and down so hopefully we can kick on and get a few wins.





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# BEN BLACKMORE

DF: Batley had a close run game in the quarters against York, like us against Doncaster, so they do know how to grind games out. It's up to us to make it as expansive a game as possible?

BB: It's a big pitch and not a big hill like they have at Batley. They're due a few good performances at Batley but hopefully it doesn't come on Sunday.

They're better than where they are in the league, just a few off games that have put them down there.

DF: How much has Wembley been discussed since that quarter-final?

BB: We didn't speak about it too much but since that Toulouse defeat, we've put the focus on the cup so obviously we are getting firing for this as getting to Wembley would be a great experience for us and our families.

Dan Fowler was speaking with Ben Blackmore, next week's he talks with Sonny Esslemont.





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# GETTING TO KNOW

## **Tightest Player?**

*James Davey but at the club it's Tubbs.*

## **Favourite Actor?**

*The Rock*

## **Rugby League Idol?**

*Lesley Vainikola*

## **Best Ground played at?**

*The Jungle - Castleford Tigers*

## **Come Dine with Me - Meal you'd make & three guests?**

*Three guests would be Peter Kay, Paddy McGuinness and Keith Lemon.*

*Starter would be a pickle tray, main would be tikka masala, dessert - sticky toffee pudding!*

## **Best RL Moment?**

*Super League Debut*



**Ben Blackmore**

**Number: 5**  
**Position: Wing**

**Height: 6ft 1'**  
**Weight: 98kg**

**Twitter:**  
**@BenBlackmore123**

## **Funniest Player?**

*Lewis Taylor, cracking banter!*

## **Best Trainer?**

*James Glover*

## **Worst Dressed?**

*Blake Broadbent*

## **City Break or Beach Holiday?**

*Beach Holiday*

## **Amateur Club?**

*Fryston Warriors*

# TODAY'S TEAMS



## SHEFFIELD EAGLES

	T	G	DG
1. Josh Guzdek	●	●	●
2. Ryan Millar	●	●	●
4. Jason Crookes	●	●	●
5. Ben Blackmore	●	●	●
6. Pat Walker	●	●	●
7. Anthony Thackeray	●	●	●
8. Pat Moran	●	●	●
9. James Davey	●	●	●
10. Matt James	●	●	●
11. Brad Knowles	●	●	●
12. Joel Farrell	●	●	●
13. Aaron Brown	●	●	●
14. Greg Burns	●	●	●
15. Oliver Davies	●	●	●
16. Corey Makelim	●	●	●
17. Shaun Pick	●	●	●
18. James Glover	●	●	●
19. Sonny Esselmont	●	●	●
21. Blake Broadbent	●	●	●
22. Paddy Burns	●	●	●
23. Rory Dixon	●	●	●
25. Lewis Taylor	●	●	●
26. Joslin Landu	●	●	●
29. Ben Hellewell	●	●	●
31. Nathan Mason	●	●	●

Referee: G. Hewer

Touch Judges: S. Mikalauskas & D. Bowmer

## BATLEY BULLDOGS

T G DG

●	●	●	1. David Scott
●	●	●	2. Wayne Reittie
●	●	●	3. Sam Smeaton
●	●	●	4. Lewis Galbraith
●	●	●	5. Johnny Campbell
●	●	●	6. Louis Jouffret
●	●	●	7. Dominic Brambani
●	●	●	8. Adam Gledhill
●	●	●	9. Alistair Leek
●	●	●	10. Tom Lillycrop
●	●	●	11. Dane Manning
●	●	●	12. Jack Downs
●	●	●	13. James Brown
●	●	●	14. Danny Yates
●	●	●	15. Toby Everett
●	●	●	16. Michael Ward
●	●	●	17. Tyler Dickinson
●	●	●	18. Tom Hemingway
●	●	●	19. Alex Bretherton
●	●	●	20. Niall Walker
●	●	●	21. Joe Taira
●	●	●	22. Sam Wood
●	●	●	23. Keenen Tomlinson
●	●	●	24. Paul Brearley
●	●	●	Sam Walters

Match Comissioner: D. Mitchell

Time Keeper: T. Randerson





# TOULOUSE OLYMPIQUE

## 20/07/19

**Toulouse Olympique's hopes of a Championship top-five finish were boosted on Saturday as they recorded back-to-back wins for the first time in five games, Toulouse climbed back up to second place with a comfortable victory over fellow play-off hopefuls Sheffield Eagles.**

In the humid heat of Southern France, it was Olympique who started brightly, with a miss-out ball to Paul Macron opening the scores which was shortly added to by Joe Bretherton, who collect a short pass from Johnathon Ford.

Sheffield replied with their only score of the first half, as the ball went to ground Anthony Thackeray showcased his soccer skills with two kicks along the ground before regathering to touch down.

Pat Walker converted the first and all of his three-goal attempts.

Toulouse resumed their dominance, forcing Sheffield into three consecutive goal-line dropouts before their three tries in 10 minutes.

Firstly, Stan Robin fed Constantine Mika to score then Toulouse recorded the score of the game as Junior Vaivai off-loaded to Mark Kheirallah who raced 70 metres to the whitewash.

Mathieu Jussaume rounded off the first half with a score in the corner, although Kheirallah couldn't convert from the touch-line Toulouse still had a healthy lead going into the interval.

After the break Toulouse soon resumed their dominance, Jussaume's break was supported by Parata who finished the move.

Moments later, Johnathan Ford found Vaivai on the left edge, who used Bergal who was in support for his first

score of the evening.

Macron scored Toulouse's eighth try of the game as Parata found the winger with a looping pass.

Sheffield scored their second of the contest as Anthony Thackeray weaved away from the Toulouse defence to play-in Joel Farrell, who went over from close-range.

Former Sheffield star Stan Robin evaded attention from Aaron Brown to race away for a well-deserved score.

Sheffield soon added a consolation with a short ball from Gregory Burns finding Oliver Davies to touch-down.

It was Sylvain Houles' side who wrapped up proceedings with a score directly from a scrum, Toulouse showcasing their French flair as they worked it to the left edgewhere Bergal scored his 8th try in two games.



# MATCH REPORT

**TOULOUSE  
OLYMPIQUE**

**56-18**

**SHEFFIELD  
EAGLES**

1. Mark Kheirallah  
20. Ilias Bergal  
26. Mathieu Jussaume  
26. Taioalo Vaivai  
25. Paul Marcon  
7. Stan Robin  
6. Johnathon Ford  
19. James Bell  
11. Constantine Mika  
10. Joe Bretherton  
18. Clement Boyer  
9. Anthony Marion  
17. Paterika Vaivai

## INTERCHANGE

14. Dean Parata  
16. Tyla Hepi  
21. Jordan Dezaria  
23. Justin Sangare



**OFFICIAL  
J. CHILD**



**STADIUM  
STADE ENREST ARGELES**



**ATTENDANCE  
2,154**

1. Josh Guzdek  
2. Ryan Millar  
19. Sonny Esslemont  
27. Jacob Ogden  
5. Ben Blackmore  
6. Pat Walker  
7. Anthony Thackeray  
17. Shaun Pick  
14. Greg Burns  
11. Bradley Knowles  
15. Olly Davies  
12. Joel Farrell  
13. Aaron Brown

## INTERCHANGE

23. Rory Dixon  
16. Corey Makelim  
21. Blake Broadbent  
22. Patrick Burns



# DEWSBURY RAMS

## 12/07/19



**Sheffield Eagles beat Dewsbury Rams 28-22 at the Olympic Legacy Park on Friday night to keep their playoff hopes alive.**

The Eagles know they have to do the chasing if they're to get into the top five but they made Friday's victory hard work due to a mix of indiscipline as well as the Rams' steely character.

Ben Blackmore had another fine performance to add to his collection, scoring twice and becoming the 52nd player to reach a century of appearances for the Red and Golds.

Jacob Ogden, Joel Farrell and Sonny Esslemont all touched down as well, however the hosts had to deal with a few injuries.

Ryan Millar, James Davey and Oliver Davies suffered knocks in the second half which made the Eagles' job tougher.

Sheffield scored twice inside 12 minutes as they got off to a brilliant start.

Blackmore and Ogden were the try-scorers but Dewsbury soon woke up and scored two of their own.

Dom Speakman made a clever move by exposing weak blind-side defence from the ruck as the hooker went over.

Speakman then set up former Eagle Kyle Trout as he muscled his way to four points.

Paul Sykes could only convert one try, leaving the Eagles 12-10 up heading into the final stages of the first period.

Blackmore completed his brace to extend the advantage but Walker was off target from the tee.

Another ex-Eagle, Michael Knowles, came back to haunt the South Yorkshire club as his converted try on 49 minutes levelled the scores.

In the final quarter, quick-fire tries from Farrell and Esslemont put the Eagles in the driving seat.

There were still a few twists in the tale, though. Rob Worrincy swooped over in the corner against his former employers and Sykes' fantastic conversion set up a nervy finish.

Esslemont went close to a second but was pushed into touch and Dewsbury almost had a chance to nick a point but an attack down the left flank ended with a knock-on.

A hard-fought victory for the Eagles to say the least and Mark Aston's side now have to shake off any niggles they may have and look forward to a clash with Toulouse on Saturday.



# MATCH REPORT

**SHEFFIELD  
EAGLES**

**28-22**

**DEWSBURY  
RAMS**

1. Mark Kheirallah  
20. Ilias Bergal  
26. Mathieu Jussaume  
26. Taioalo Vaivai  
25. Paul Marcon  
7. Stan Robin  
6. Johnathon Ford  
19. James Bell  
11. Constantine Mika  
10. Joe Bretherton  
18. Clement Boyer  
9. Anthony Marion  
17. Paterika Vaivai

## INTERCHANGE

14. Dean Parata  
16. Tyla Hepi  
21. Jordan Dezaria  
23. Justin Sangare



**OFFICIAL  
G. HEWER**



**STADIUM  
OLYMPIC LEGACY PARK**

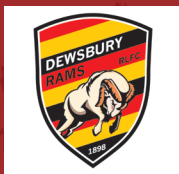


**ATTENDANCE  
791**

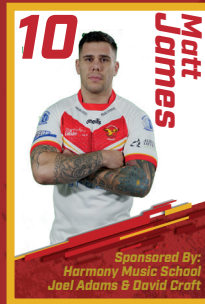
42. Joe Martin  
23. Rob Worrincy  
32. Owen Trout  
4. Adam Ryder  
5. Connor McGrath  
6. Paul Sykes  
38. Liam Finn  
8. Jade Sheriffe  
43. Dom Speakman  
19. Daniel Igbinedion  
34. Dan Waite-Pullan  
12. Michael Knowles  
13. Kyle Trout

## INTERCHANGE


18. Sam Day  
11. Lucas Walshaw  
39. Chris Annakin  
30. Tom Garratt



# PLAYER PROFILES



**15** **Oliver Davies**




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**16** **Corey Makelim**



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**17** **Shaun Pick**



Sponsored By:  
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**18** **James Glover**



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**19** **Sonny Esslemont**



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**21** **Blake Broadbent**



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Martyn Connelly

**22** **Paddy Burns**



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**23** **Rory Dixon**



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**26** **Joslin Landu**



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**HEAD COACH**  
**Mark Aston**



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# VIEW FROM THE PARK



Well, here we are. 80 minutes away from Wembley. What a day it'll be for either Eagles or Bulldogs fans, depending on which way this match goes today at the Olympic Legacy Park.

The fact Sheffield have done the double over Batley this year does not come into the equation, for me. As we know, cup competitions can be a lottery and can go any way at any time. The chance to follow in the footsteps of the 1998 squad is something not many people would have dreamt of at the start of the season but as we have got further and further into this competition, the reality of being so close has certainly hit.

'That' Doncaster match, 'that' "scenes on toast" tweet. That will live long in the memory anyway as one of the most dramatic finishes to an Eagles match in recent memory. If we have similar today, I don't think I'll be alive to see it as my ticker won't be able to keep up with that sort of drama!

Both sides come into this weekend's semi-final after recent losses in the league. In scorching Toulouse weather, the Eagles were beaten by Toulouse and a day later saw Batley defeated at the Leigh Sports Village at the hands of the Centurions. Of course that is in the past and needs to be forgotten about as there's only one thing on the minds of both sets of players today.

On a fast surface, in (hopefully) delightful weather, it should be an entertaining game with both sides looking to throw the ball around with ease and expose gaps in the defence. If Ben Blackmore and Ryan Millar can get the Eagles on the front foot with some carries out of dummy-half, it's certainly hard

to stop Sheffield when they have a roll on like that.

However, Batley have their own threat too with the likes of Leeds loanees Jack Broadbent and Sam Walters featuring in the backs and the pack respectively. Their forwards are big and have a knack of offloading at vital times, that is something the Eagles have to deter.

Just finally, I'd like to send my condolences to the friends and family of Batley fan Stephen Senior who passed away last Sunday. Affectionately known as 'Pie-man', from my experiences at Batley games (been to my fair share as my girlfriend is a Bulldogs fan!) he was a terrific and funny guy and was a pleasure to chat to. In the 66th minute of the match today, Batley fans will be holding a minute's applause in memory of Stephen so if the Eagles fans can join in while that is going on, that would be brilliant. Rest in Peace, Stephen.



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# CHAPLAIN'S COLUMN

**I'm writing this article after returning home at two in the morning from a wonderful week with Linda in Toulouse. We had fantastic weather, a great apartment, lovely food and wine and such a great time relaxing and chilling, taking in the varied scenery.**

On Sunday afternoon, after an extended lunch with two Eagles fans before they flew back to the UK, we sat in the square listening and watching people of all ages dancing to a wide genre of Jazz music.

So many people smiling and enjoying themselves as they danced in pairs, threes or by themselves in various fashions as they moved to the rhythm of the music.

Each hour the music style changed as someone new took over the role of dj, playing their particular set of music.

One guy who was dancing was wearing a T-Shirt with the following phrase: 'Great Choices Make Great Stories.' This got me thinking.

Initially I thought I wish I'd known that when I was younger; maybe I would have had less scrapes and negative stories in my life experiences. I know some of my bad choices were in an attempt to cover up my failures. But H Stanley Judd says:

'Don't be afraid to fail. Don't waste energy

trying to cover up failure. Learn from your failures and go on to the next challenge. It's OK to fail. If you're not failing, you're not growing.'

And not all bad choices we make end badly: some I have made have ended a lot later turning into a great story.

As Winston Churchill said: "All men make mistakes, but only wise men learn from their mistakes." One of the saddest things that can happen to any of us is not learning from the mistakes we make.

However it's probably fair to say, the better the choices the better the outcome and the more information we have about a situation can help us make the wisest or right decision for us at that moment.

'Life is a matter of choices, and every

choice you make makes you.' John C. Maxwell

And not just big choices; 'Sometimes it's the smallest decisions that can change your life forever' Kere Russel.

So next time you face a decision ask yourself: are you likely to regret the results or rejoice in them? What's the chance of your choice leading to a great story?

Enjoy the game

Club Chaplain - Baz Gascoyne

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